

COLONIAL EMIGRATION SOCIETY.

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THE RIGHT HON. LORD LEIGH W. SCHOLEFIELD, ESQ., M.P.

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OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

To disseminate information on the subject of Emigration.

To assist intending Emigrants by information and advice.

To make arrangements for the passage of Emigrants to the Colonies.

To make advances, by way of loan, whenever the funds of the Society shall permit, to Emigrants, for their outward passage.

To correspond with the Colonial Governments in reference to the labour requirements of their respective Colonies, and the classes of Emigrants needed; and to obtain their co-operation and support.

To carry out these objects, the Committee appeal to the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants generally of the vast district of which Birmingham is the centre, confidently anticipating for the undertaking the support it deserves.

To the mercantile classes the Committee desire to point out the increasing commerce which must result from the development of our Colonies; in proof of which it has been ascertained that our South Pacific Colonies take from us in imports for every man, woman, and child of their respective populations, on the average, from £8 to £10 per head per annum, while the United States were only customers to us in 1859 (before the war began) at the rate of 17s. per head.

To the ratepayers they say, "Help our *sur* abundant population, and prevent them from becoming paupers, by the advice and assistance it will be the province of this Society to supply."

From our inland position, correct information on the important subject of Emigration is difficult to obtain. The numerous inquiries made, since the Meeting* was held at the Midland Institute, show the interest felt in it here to be as great as in other parts of the kingdom; and there is not a doubt that the Colonies will gladly co-operate with a society established on sound principles, whose aim will be to send the "*right people to the right place*," for their benefit equally with our own.

It is not proposed to give *free* passages, but to grant assistance by *loans*, at the discretion of the Committee, to deserving Emigrants; and it is hoped the Society will, in a few years, have at its disposal a Benevolent Fund sufficient to compass a great and constantly increasing amount of good. As it will materially aid the undertaking if the Colonial Commissioners, who attended the preliminary Meeting, are in a position to inform their different Governments, on returning to the Colonies, that the Society has commenced its operations, the Committee earnestly impress on all able and willing to assist in this good work the importance of not losing time in raising the necessary funds.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

Birmingham, September, 1862.

EDWARD GEM, Chairman.

* The Preliminary Meeting, held on the 20th of August, was presided over by H. MANTON, Esq., Mayor of Birmingham, and attended by an influential company of Merchants and Manufacturers. LORD LYTTTELTON was present, and also the following Representatives of the Colonies to the International Exhibition—Hon. R. WILKINSON, Esq., Nova Scotia; B. CHAMBERLAIN, Esq., Canada; SEDGWICK COWPER, Esq., New South Wales; F. G. KNIGHT, Esq., Victoria; Captain DAGOT, South Australia; and Dr. MILLIGAN, Tasmania.

COLONIAL EMIGRATION.

To the Secretary of the Colonial Emigration Society, Birmingham.

MY DEAR SIR—Deeply impressed as I have long been with the vast importance to the present and future prosperity of England's trade and commerce, of a well-directed course being given to the inevitable emigration of large numbers of her working population, I hail with excited hopes the move in the right direction now being made in Birmingham, and I trust your good example will be followed by the other large manufacturing towns, and also that your and their exertions will not be confined to the dissemination of information to intending emigrants respecting the colonies to which it may be desirable they should go, but that they will bring their powerful influence to bear upon their representatives in Parliament, so as to elicit its attention to this important question with the view of inducing Government to take the part it ought to do in assisting emigration to the colonies.

England exercises a perfect and uncontrolled empire over the entire of Southern Africa, as well as over the vast continent of Australia and its dependencies, together containing a surface vastly exceeding in extent both Europe and the United States, every portion of which that is South of the tropic of Capricorn, experience has proved to be admirably suited for the Anglo-Saxon race, as well as being particularly prolific under the cultivation of that race of everything that Europe requires for the ease, comfort, and support of its over-crowded population. And if we look forward to that which must be the result of increased population in these countries, or consider what they now might have arrived at, if the emigration of the last ten years had been fostered and assisted so as to direct a far larger proportion of it in that direction, enough may be learned to show that England has indeed a very deep interest in the course taken by emigration from her shores. It is much to be regretted that her people should treat this question with such great indifference, and that even those who would most benefit by its proper direction, the master manufacturers, appear to pass it by as a matter in which they have no interest whatever.

That such is the case may be gathered from the silence indicative of assent with which the House of Commons, on a late occasion, received Mr. Adderley's assertion "that England ought not to be chargeable with the cost of the Emigration Commission, inasmuch as it is a matter in which she is in no way concerned." Even in the teeth of this assertion of Mr. Adderley, it will not be very difficult to prove that England, and more particularly England's manufacturers, have a very deep interest in the course taken by her emigration: for to say that emigration is not wanted, or that it can be intercepted or prevented, is just sheer nonsense. It exists; it has existed, in a steady stream, for more than forty years; and as well might the attempt be made to intercept the outflow of the Thames or the Mersey, as to stop it. Such being the case, would it not be wise to endeavour to direct its course into those channels most fruitful in benefits to the country it flows from?

Every manufacturer is fully alive to the fact that, perhaps, his greatest source of anxiety is to be found, not in his powers of producing, but in finding markets for his goods when made; and yet, strange to say, the power England possesses of creating valuable and permanent markets, by well directed emigration, does not appear to have commanded the least attention.

From the statistics of emigration and exports the following may be gathered:—

Fully three-fifths of the emigration from England for the last forty years has been to the United States, the population of which in 1850 had grown to about thirty millions.

In that year they imported from England to the value of £25,200,000, being at the rate of about 17s. for each person.

The number that emigrated to the Australian colonies must have been much less than a million, for in that year their entire population did not exceed that number; and in that year their imports from England amounted to £16,000,000, which gives just £16. for each person.

Now as these have been about the most important markets for English manufacturers that England possesses, and as each emigrant to the last named is a customer to many times the amount of those to the States, it is very evident that if the larger portion of the emigrants had gone to the Australian colonies the benefit to England in a mercantile point of view would have been incalculably great.

If viewed as to its political bearing on the fortunes of England, it will be seen that in that direction she has been a fearful sufferer also, for every emigrant to the States has gone to strengthen the hands of her bitterest enemy; while the vast empire she has planted in the East, and which she has the power, if she pleases, to expand until it rivals in its proportions those of the unfriendly States, has been left to struggle onwards by its own exertions, unaided and unsided by the Mother Country.

You are aware that hitherto the Australian colonies have been required to supply the entire of the funds for the import of labour; now it is very evident that this is decidedly unjust, for both the emigrant and England are benefited by the transfer

quite as much as the colonies, and therefore it would be but fair that they should bear a proportion of the cost.

It is a well known fact that the great cause of the vast preponderance of emigration to the States is traceable to the cheapness of the transit, as compared with that to the more distant colonies, while it is equally well known that perhaps a majority of intending emigrants would gladly go to the latter if they could get there for the same money. If, then, England will (as in justice both to herself and the other parties concerned she is bound to do) bear her fair proportion of the additional costs, the colonies will gladly contribute theirs, and a steady and abundant supply of the unemployed labour of this country may be transferred to those places where its services are required, and where the remuneration it will receive will be such as to place it in a state of comparative affluence that will enable it to become a customer for British exports to many fold the amount it ever had been or would be in any other country.

But it is not only through extended markets for her manufactures, that England is benefited by emigration to her Australian colonies, for it must not be overlooked that she receives from them some of her most important supplies of raw material, which places her in a commanding position in the markets of the world, to say nothing of their gold, which has taken so prominent a part in advancing her prosperity in latter years. The vast importance their supply of wool has arrived at is too well known to require comment. Their copper, lead, and tin, also, of which there is no other limit than the quantity of labour applicable to their production, already exercise a beneficial influence on her manufactures, particularly the first of them. This is well understood both in Birmingham and Sheffield, where the excellence of the Australian copper is fairly estimated, and its controlling influence on the copper market must be beneficially felt.

Another important channel for usefulness to England of her Australian colonies now presents itself in the production of cotton, and there is no reason to doubt but that the skill and energy which have hitherto been displayed in these colonies in their other undertakings will prove successful in this also.

The idea so generally entertained that so-called cheap labour is indispensable for the production of cotton, so as to compete with that grown by slave labour in America, is a very great mistake, and fearfully injurious, as throwing doubt and difficulties in the way of those who would engage in its production in other countries.

Slave labour is very far from cheap, although no wages are paid; but when the capital sunk in the purchase of slaves, their maintenance, clothing, and keeping in sickness and in health, in infancy and old age, are all taken into account, together with the comparative small amount of work by the few out of an establishment that are employed in the fields, it will be found that slave labour is neither as cheap or profitable as free—even at the high rates paid for the latter in the free states of America, or in Australia.

The few specimens of Australian-grown cotton now exhibited in London prove incontestably the suitability of its soil and climate for the production of a very superior article, and all recent accounts show that all the colonies are quite alive to the subject, and were preparing to try its cultivation to an extent that will at once determine whether it will be generally successful. If these trials prosper, we may be assured that in the following year it will occupy a large portion of the time and attention of all the agricultural population, for, fortunately, the season for cotton cultivation will not in any manner interfere with the cultivation of grain, but will, in fact, furnish employment at times when, at present, they find little to do. Ploughing and seedtime for grain are in the months of April, May, and June, hay harvest in November, and that for grain in December and January. Cotton will be cultivated in August and September, and gathered in March. Machinery will be certain to lend its powerful aid in all the manipulations to which the cotton will have to be submitted, so that no diminution in the present rates of wages ruling in these countries will be necessary to enable its cultivators to produce it at a price that will enable them to compete in the English market with that received from America.

If you think the above remarks worthy of publication, you are perfectly at liberty to make use of them, but as practice is better than precept, I avail myself of this opportunity to enrol myself as a member of the society now in course of formation in Birmingham, and send a cheque for £5. as my first year's subscription.

I am, my dear sir, faithfully yours,

C. H. BAGOT,

~~Secretary of the Colonial Emigration Society~~
of South Australia—
International Exhibition.

International Exhibition, London,
South Australian Court,
Sept. 1st, 1862.